

The Passing of Brickville

By Joseph N. Quill.

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The destiny of Brickville was decided when Pikey McGinn's chimney caught fire, and in that flame the Brickvillian hope of a metropolis in the heart of the Bad Lands went up in smoke.

Brickville didn't realize it at the moment, because, paradoxical as it may seem, the little blaze which destroyed the town was easily got under control. The place hadn't progressed as far as a fire department, and it would not have helped matters if it had. A tipsy cowboy who had been sampling Pikey's hardware vaulted to the back of a wild-looking cayuse, yelled a few times in hearty Montana fashion, and then swung his riata at the chimney. As the noise fell fair about the stack of bricks he dug spurs into the sides of his mount and made a run upon the rope.

The chimney came down with a crash; the fire was out; the fate of Brickville was written.

That is why the town does not appear upon any map. But if ever you have ridden over the Northern Pacific you can probably recall a long and narrow valley to the north as you passed out of the Bad Lands of Dakota into the Bad Lands of Montana. That is where Brickville stood. The soil all about is hard and dry and red, and there is no verdure. Not anywhere in sight is there a tree. The side hills are seamed with black strata, and the rains have carried stains from these and streaked the valley with them on both sides of the muddy little stream which winds away to the south.

The black strata are seams of bituminous coal, and it was in mining this coal that the Brickvillians made their living. There is still pay in these streaks, but the people who worked them have drifted away, and on the site of the town prairie dogs and coyotes and rattlesnakes hold annual conventions which never adjourn.

If any place ever fully justified its name, that place was Brickville. At the height of its prosperity it had, exclusive of sheds and stables, 87 one-story buildings, including the railroad station, the saloon and the tonorial parlor, and every one of them was of brick—even the sheds. There were optimists who looked forward to a brick court-house and a brick jail, and but for the fire in Pikey McGinn's chimney these aspirations might have been realized.

Pierre Succotash played perhaps the most prominent part in Brickville's destruction. Pierre was a French-Canadian, whose rear name had come into collision with Brickville's sense of propriety, and some of its letters were dislocated by the shock. He had been gold mining in British Columbia, and no one had inquired very closely into the reason of his coming from a gold to a coal camp; it would have established an uncomfortable precedent. But he went nosing about the wreck of that chimney, as he went nosing into everything that happened in town; and Fred Ritchie, who conducted "the tonorial parlor," which was across the street from McGinn's, saw him suddenly dart in and pick up a broken brick.

Now Fred and Succotash had said some unpleasant things to each other once upon a time, and Fred, believing that Pierre was courting trouble, promptly ran in for his gun; but when he came out, Succotash was nowhere to be seen.

Next morning Pikey found that some one had carried off nearly half of his chimney bricks, and he promptly declared it to be the work of Sianteys McCafferty, his hated rival in the hardware business. Mac denied this in vigorous language, and a gunplay was imminent when the whisky agent happened along and announced a reduction in rates by the barrel; and then they had a drink, and ordered half a barrel each, and the hatchet was buried.

But war was on hotter than ever next day, for the remainder of Pikey's loose bricks had disappeared in the night. Pikey swore that Sianteys was planning a cheap extension to his gun mill, and Mac retorted that he would be a fool indeed to go around picking up hoodlums that had fallen from his rival's leaky roof.

Then each got a shotgun and stood out in front of his saloon waiting for the other to come along. And the result of this was that trade fell off in both places, for Brickvillians knew that shotguns scattered their charges and they refused to stake their thirst when there was a chance that a stray buckshot might next moment spring them aleak. So it was that business interests induced the rivals for a second time to declare a truce, and then the town breathed easier and drank oftener.

A week later Succotash was a passenger on a west-bound express with a ticket to Glenside in his hat band. And the next east-bound freight brought in a very scarce article—some lumber—and a heavy iron roller marked with his name. On his return he installed the roller in the brick shack where he slept and put a big padlock on the door. What he did in that place was the town mystery. But he was flush of money, and one day he caused a sensation. He became the owner of a saloon, having bought out Pikey McGinn—taking bar, stock, goodwill and building.

Then, to the greater surprise of Brickville, he promptly sold to Pikey's hated rival everything but the building. Pikey swore it was all a put-up job, and left town in disgust. Succotash said it was because he intended to tear down the old house and put up a better one. And tear down the old place he did, and he carried the bricks away to his mystery shed—to store them there until he was ready to build, he said.

But the only thing that Pierre built at that time was a wooden water trough, leading from his well to the brick shed. Most of the day and all of the night he locked himself in that shed with his secret. Those who passed in the rear of the place de-

clared that they could hear him grinning something, and because of a pool of red water which had accumulated near the shed they thought it must be the bricks.

Now, Fred Ritchie was one of those who regarded Pierre's conduct as most suspicious. He gave a good deal of thought to the mystery of the shed and the tearing down of McGinn's saloon, and finally he recalled having seen Succotash grab that piece of brick and make off with it. Then it occurred to him also that it was Pierre who had caused all the trouble between Pikey and Sianteys by stealing the chimney. And one day when Succotash was down in town buying provisions Fred sneaked out the back way of his shop with a bit and stock and bored a hole in the mortar between the bricks of Pierre's shed to discover what his secret might be. As Pierre worked that night Fred had his eye glued to this hole and noted what he was doing.

Next morning his neighbors were surprised at finding that Ritchie's chimney had fallen during the night, and they were astonished to see Fred carrying the bricks into his barber shop and piling them up with great care. He wasn't going to have them stolen, as Pikey's were, he told them. And as they passed by the shop later in the day and looked in they saw him pounding away at the bricks, breaking them into bits and scanning each piece carefully.

One of his customers was let into the secret, and another chimney fell. This man passed the secret on to a bosom friend, and then there was another crash of brick. Within 24 hours every man, woman and child in the town was pulverizing brick as if life depended upon it.

The secret was a secret no longer. Succotash had found gold in the piece of brick that Ritchie had seen him dart forward to pick up, and he had found more in the bricks he had stolen from Pikey. With the proceeds he had set up an anarstra in the shed.



McGinn Saw Him Pick Up a Broken Brick.

and in this he was grinding gold out of the bricks of Pikey's dismantled saloon.

Ritchie and the others found scales and grains and specks of gold. When the chimney bricks had been ground up the wall bricks followed, and in a short space of time Brickville was a town of tents again.

Then it was announced suddenly that Succotash and Ritchie had patched up their trouble and that Pierre had sold his anarstra to Fred. This was followed by Pierre's departure from town. "He has made his pile," the Brickvillians said to one another.

The coal pits had been abandoned for this new method of gold mining, and there wasn't a whole brick building in the place when a freight brakeman one day brought a startling piece of news into the town.

Succotash had bought a claybank in Basin, and a brickyard as well; and he had astonished the good people of that nook in the mountains by converting this claybank into a gold mine and this brickyard into a mill in which to treat his rich clay, for the gold could not be freed by ordinary process of placer washing.

Then Brickville collectively kicked itself for not having thought to trace out this brickyard before the man from Canada; and the Brickvillians folded their tents and went scurrying away to the mountains to search there for other claybanks that were studded with nuggets of gold.

And so it was that the fire in Pikey McGinn's chimney happened to destroy the town.

An Unnecessary Institution.

Hymen—I say, cupid, what is the lookout for business this season? Leap-year is drawing to a close. Are the girls proposing much in this territory you have been looking over?

Cupid—I find that the girls are not proposing at all.

Hymen—Gracious! That's bad for business!

Cupid—Not at all. Here they don't have to.

A Grave Misapprehension.

"Are your sons, Mrs. Comeup, attending those college esoteric lectures?"

"No, sir; my boys ain't attending any kind of 'esot' lectures. They don't need warnings about the drink habit."—Baltimore American.

Elevating Themselves.

Faustous Friend—The Comeups are telling their friends they are going on a "tower" of Europe.

Cynical Acquaintance—I suppose, then, they expect to have a high old time.—Baltimore American.

Foolish Man.

Briggs—Even divorce, nowadays, offers no sure relief.

Griggs—How so?

"Why, in nine cases out of ten a man is free to marry again."—Life.

Starting.

Mrs. Bullion—I wish I knew something to do that would provide me with an absolutely new sensation.

Mr. Bullion—Go out and pay cash for something.—Life.

—Patronize Dispatch advertisers.

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A SWEET PRECEDENT.

A hat the size of Saturn's rings
She wore, quite lost to view
But when I asked: "Why hide your head?"
She looked surprised and only said:
"The other girls all do."

In dress she wore enormities,
The drenched sheath gown, too.
A modest, shrinking maid is she,
But fatefully she says to me:
"The other girls all do."

One day I caught her in a fib,
Not very large, 'tis true.
Still, when I urged—as duty led—
A slight remonstrance, this she said:
"The other girls all do!"

So from her book a leaf I took,
And one I'll never rue.
Now when I beg her for a kiss
And then some more—I say just this:
"The other girls all do!"
—May Kelly, in Puck.

A Minor Poesy.

A thought once stole, by mistake,
Into the mind of a minor poet. It was a very little thought and it was frightened at the vast empty spaces, and cowered timidly into a dark corner, where it hoped to escape to escape observation.

But in a moment the poet had discovered it, and straightway he pounced upon it avidly, and mauled, jammed, cut, squeezed and otherwise tortured it.

The thought suffered greatly, but the poet did not desist until he had achieved his purpose, which was to grind out another sonnet and keep himself before the public.—Puck.

Family Suspicion.

"So you have traced your ancestry away back to the old barons of the Rhine!"

"Yes," answered Mr. Dustin Star.

"What a pity you can't meet some of them!"

"I don't know about that. Those old barons of the Rhine seem picturesque from this distance. But a man of wealth was liable to be more or less embarrassed by a personal meeting with any of them."—Washington Star.

Free from One Scandal.

Robert Fulton was starting up the Hudson river with his first steamboat. "Everybody tells me I am taking a gambler's chance with this thing," he said, "but I'm not springing any slot machine game on the public anyhow."

For this, as we learn from subsequent history, was reserved for lake steamers of a later period.—Chicago Tribune.

Long and Terrible Words.

No doubt the wicked little germs denounced in scientific terms would be disinterested and impartial if they could hear the names they're called.

—Washington Star.

ONE OF THE DRAWBACKS.

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Weak Kidneys, surely point to weak Kidney Nerves. The Kidneys, like the Heart, and the Stomach, find their weakness, not in the organ itself, but in the nerves that control and guide and strengthen them. Dr. Shoop's Restorative is a medicine specifically prepared to reach these controlling nerves. To doctor the Kidneys alone, is futile. It is a waste of time, and of money as well.

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LEGAL NOTICE.

Notice is hereby given that B. F. Kennedy intends to file a petition in the Probate Court of Mahoning County, Ohio, praying that his name be changed to B. F. K. Williams. Said petition will be for hearing on or after the 24th day of November, 1908.

L. O. Casey, Attorney for Plaintiff

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We've carefully gone through our stock and have chosen for this sale, 36 high grade Suits that remain from rapid selling lines. These are models that cannot be duplicated except in cheaper materials, as there is a scarcity of high grade materials. This we will not do, as we prefer to sacrifice the profit rather than to cheapen our exclusive styles.

The Style, Fit, Finish, Material, and Workmanship of all these Suits is absolutely the best—and briefly we'll describe just a few of them.

Please remember that you must take them without alterations.

No. 384.—Suit of Scotch tweed, in brown and grey, mixed stripe. 34 inch Jacket, with full flare skirt, with buttons down front. Jacket lined with guaranteed silk. Excellent Suit for street wear, as the cloth does not show soil, and does not muss readily. Sizes 34, 36, 38. Regular price \$25.00. On sale at.....\$19.00

No. 288.—Suit of hard twisted worsted English suiting, in grey stripe, strictly tailored style; Jacket 45 inches long, lined two-thirds with guaranteed taffeta. The skirt is a full gored, flare style. Sizes 34, and 38. Regular price \$39.50. On sale at.....\$31.95

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No. 200.—Suit of imported English Coating, 38-inch coat, with deep pointed front, tastefully trimmed with braid and buttons; lined with light grey taffeta. Flare skirt with fold and inverted plait at back. Just two suits, one black, other brown, both with neat white stripe. Sizes 36 and 38. Regular price \$45. On sale at.....\$36.95

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